THE MAXX
image
16
FEB
$1.95

image™ COMICS PRESENTS:

story & art
SAM KIETH

budget dialogue while Bill's on vacation
SAM KIETH

finishes
JIM SINCLAIR

lettering
MIKE HEISLER

color
STEVE OLIFF
and **OLYOPTICS**

logo
CHANCE WOLF

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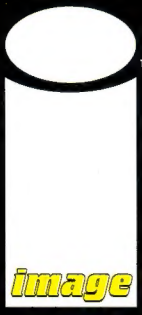
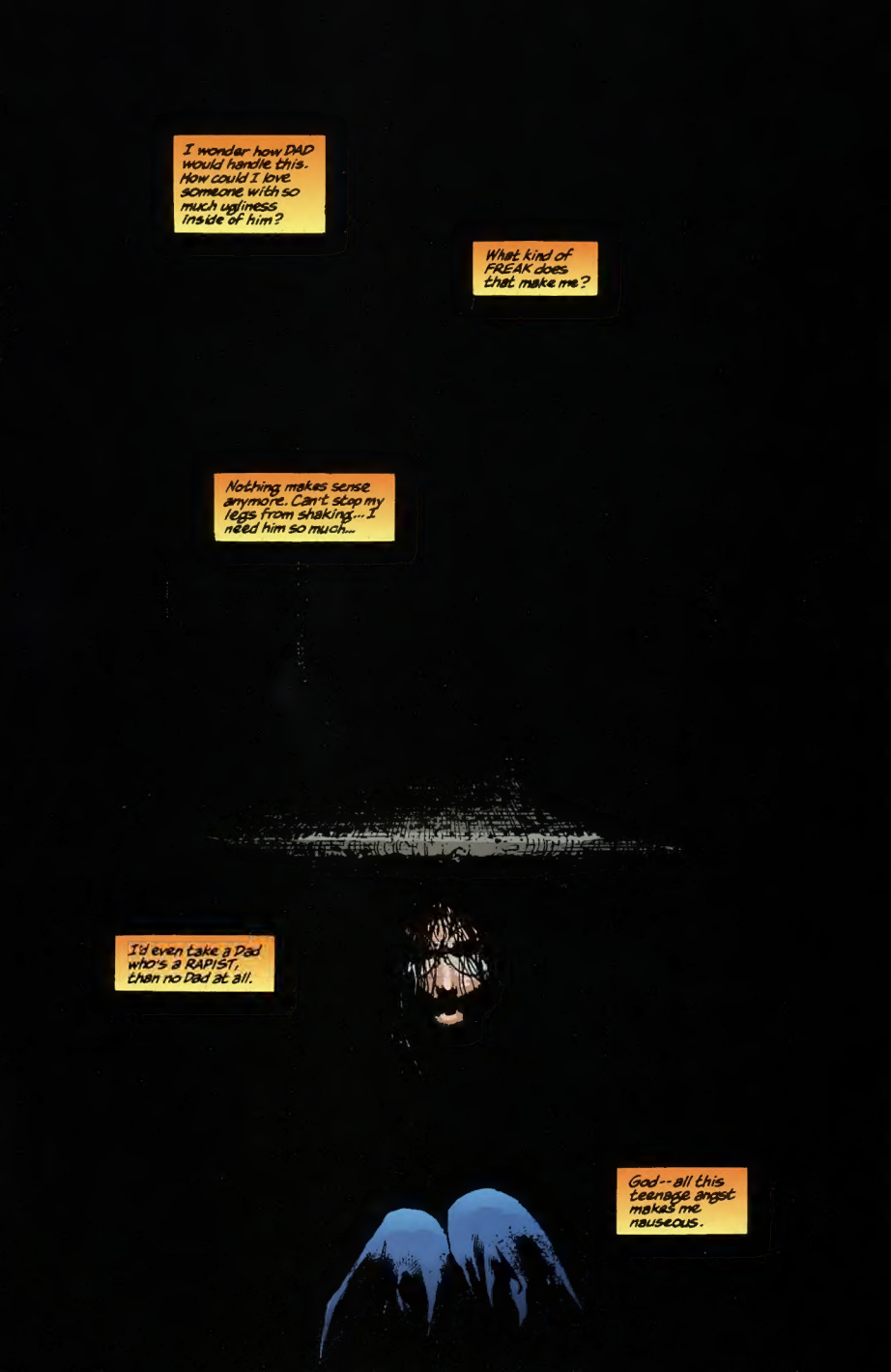


How the hell did I wind up here?
Looks like that creepy little dude in the corner's not gonna be any TROUBLE, at least. Those have got to be the largest SNEAKERS I've ever seen.
That's right, little creep-- you just sit there and pick your nose and stay the hell away from me.


I wonder how DAD would handle this. How could I love someone with so much ugliness inside of him?
What kind of FREAK does that make me?
Nothing makes sense anymore. Can't stop my legs from shaking... I need him so much...
I'd even take a Dad who's a RAPIST, than no Dad at all.
God -- all this teenage angst makes me nauseous.

How much worse can it get? I'm in jail for the night. I'd better not turn my back on the little guy with big feet. I've truly hit bottom, I'm in...
HEY LADY.
THE NAME'S FRIDGE.
YOU KNOW THAT LITTLE GUY ACROSS FROM YOU? HE'S NOT LIKE US. HE'S NOT EVEN HUMAN. THAT THING ATE THE LAST TWO GUYS IN HERE. IT LOOKS HUMAN, BUT IT'S NOT.
YEAH, RIGHT. GIMME A BREAK.
BEFORE THE NIGHT'S OVER, YOU'LL KNOW...

It took most of the night to push that old freak's threats out of my mind...
...and about a second for it all to come...
...back.
WHY YOU LITTLE...
SNICKER
SHUT UP!

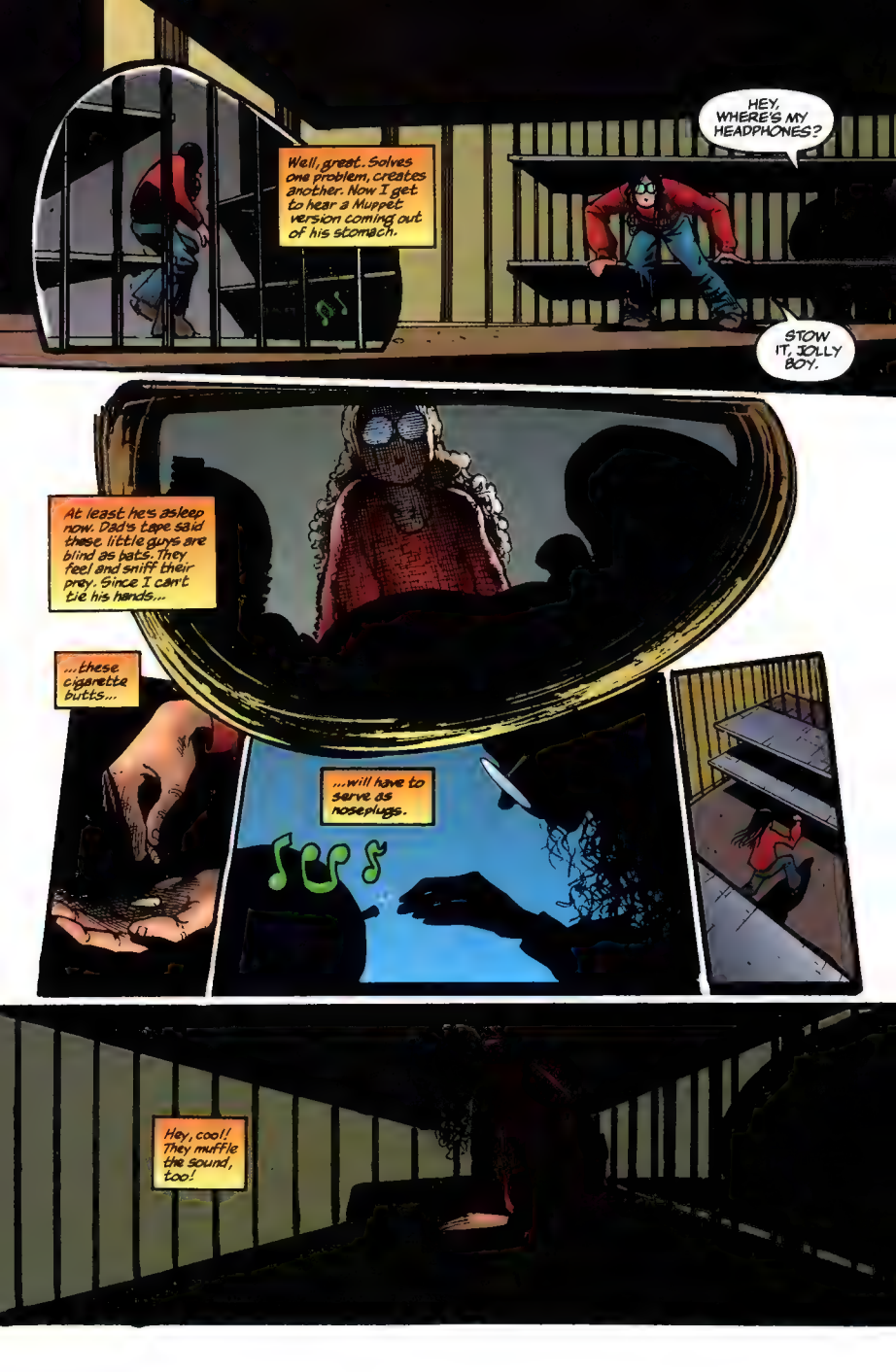
I LOVE THIS FRIGGIN' SONG. IT'S GREAT. IT'S ABOUT THIS WOMAN WHO TELLS THIS HOUSEWIFE ABOUT...
I'VE HEARD IT. IT MAKES ME ILL.
THEN I'LL TURN IT UP NICE AND LOUD, JUST FOR YOU.
YOU KNOW WHAT PARADISE IS? IT'S AN ILLUSION. YOU KNOW WHAT REALITY IS? IT'S YOUR HUSBAND, THE SAME ONE YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE LOVE TO TONIGHT. THAT'S BEAUTY. THAT'S TRUTH.
O.K. I'm still in jail, the little creep is still in the corner, but now he's movin' in, and this jerk is forcing me to listen to the worst song in the world. How did I get here?
A mere 24 hours ago, everything was...

...clear.
. . . . . .CLICK.
WOW! SO THAT'S IT. THIS TAPE EXPLAINS IT ALL. DAD KNEW EVERYTHING, AND NOW I'VE GOT TO TELL THEM BOTH.

The first one I went to was Maxx. There wasn't much time, and Maxx was our only chance. Julie was still in la-la land.
Well, I didn't need the tape to tell me that.
HEY, UNCLE EDDIE! THAT CHICK'S GONNA RAT OUT OUR TAGGING!
GOLLY-- THAT'S UNFAIR. LET'S SKEEDADDLE!
HISSSS
The taggers took off when I came to Maxx's alley, and like an idiot, I picked up the can.
SQUIRT
FREEZE!
was the cliché the cops chose.
I left my one phone call on my mom's answering machine. Sooner or later she's bound to get it... it's the LATER I worry about.

Jesus! He must have the damn thing on repeat. It's a special form of hell, listening to the same song over and over, let alone one as bad as this.
Even though Fridge is sitting up, I can still hear him snoring. But the snoring guy in the next cell is the least of my worries.
It's the silent one in front of me that's got me creeped out.

So if he has bad enough taste to want to eat ME...
...maybe he can stomach this music.
BOOM!
CRUNCH!
...GONNA MAKE LOVE TONIGHT...


Well, great. Solves one problem, creates another. Now I get to hear a Muppet version coming out of his stomach.
HEY, WHERE'S MY HEADPHONES?
STOW IT, JOLLY BOY.
At least he's asleep now. Dad's tape said these little guys are blind as bats. They feel and sniff their prey. Since I can't tie his hands...
...these cigarette butts...
...will have to serve as noseplugs.
Hey, cool! They muffle the sound, too!

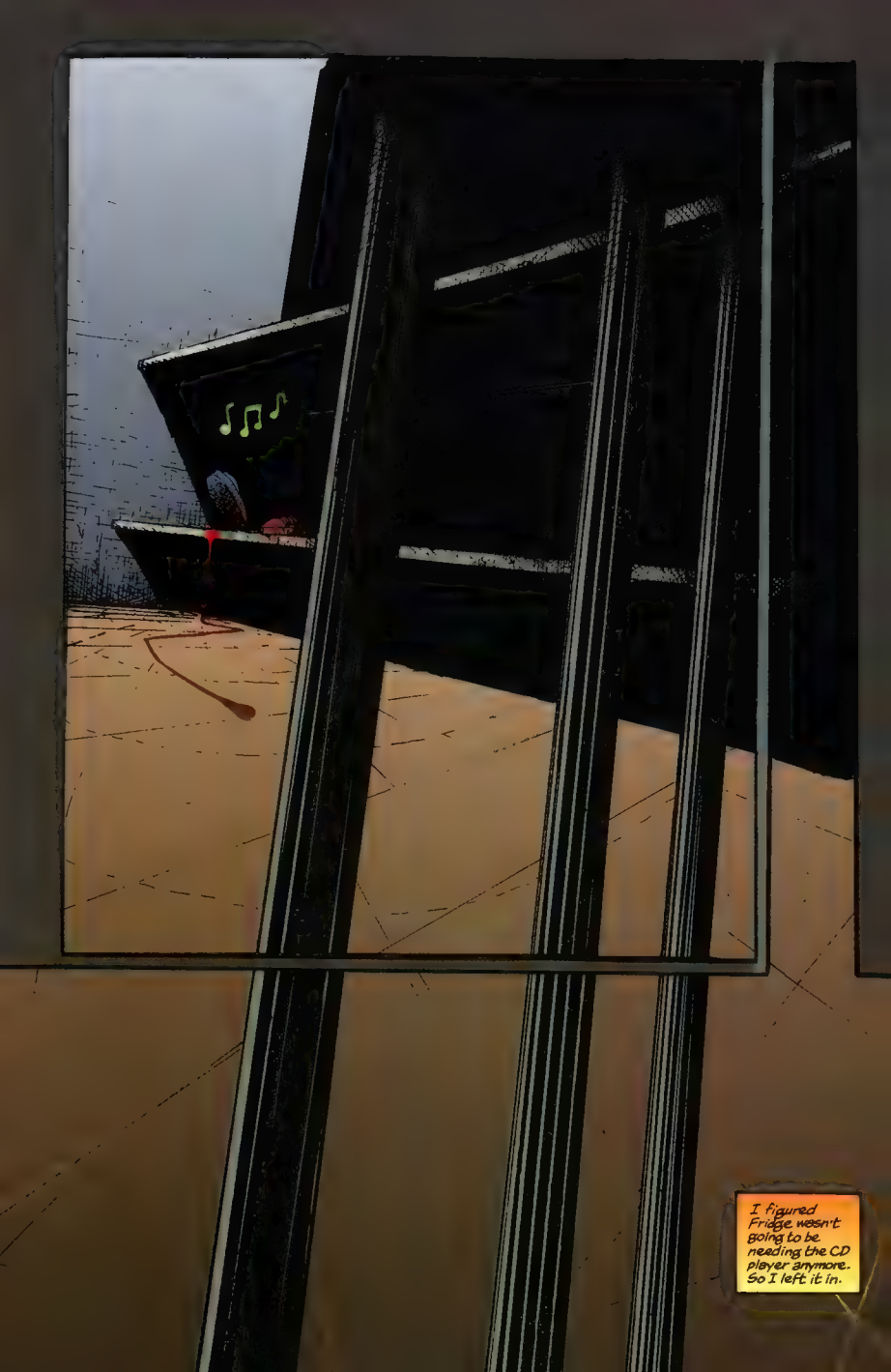
WELL, KID, YA DONE PRETTY GOOD, SO FAR.
THE OTHER TWO GUYS DIDN'T LAST THIS LONG. I STILL OUGHTA MESS YOU UP FOR TRASHIN' MY DISC PLAYER AND HEADPHONES LIKE DAT.
I'M SHAKIN'.
TELL YA WHAT, KID. THAT THINGS STILL WORKIN' INSIDE, GET YOUR HANDS ON A GOOD SHANK, AND YOU COULD CUT 'IM OPEN, SOLVE BOTH OUR PROBLEMS.
GREAT. IF I HAD A SHANK.
THE ANSWER'S RIGHT UNDER YOUR BUTT.
'S'N'OL' MAGAZINE, LADIES' HOME JOURNAL, I THINK.
IT'S BEEN SOAKED, DRIED AND TWISTED TO A POINT. JUST ONE THING, KID-- YOU SURE THEY CAN'T HEAR?
YOU KNOW, I JUST DON'T CARE!

SHE'S GONE. THEY MUST'VE LET HER OUT WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING.
YOU LEAP TO YOUR FEET AND THE FIRST THING YOU REALIZE IS...
SNIFF SNIFF SNIFF
...NOT ONLY IS SHE GONE, BUT EVERYTHING IS.

THERE'S NOT A SMELL IN THE WHOLE PLACE. SO YOU FEEL...
SNIFF SNIFF
...UNDER YOUR BUNK...
SNIFF SNIFF
...JUST TO MAKE SURE.
NOTHING.
SO YOU CHECK HER SIDE, FEELING EVERY SQUARE INCH UNDERNEATH.
EVEN THE UPPER BUNK. BUT STILL...
...EMPTY.

BUT YOU'RE STILL HUNGRY, AND WHO KNOWS HOW LONG IT'S GONNA BE BEFORE THEY BRING SOMEBODY ELSE IN.
COULD BE HOURS...
...OR DAYS.
FRIDGE DOESN'T EXACTLY FIT THROUGH THE BARS.
NOT ALL AT ONCE, ANYWAY.
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP

YOU COME BACK TO THE ONLY PLACE YOU'RE SAFE.
THE ONLY PLACE YOU HAVEN'T SEARCHED.
AND SHE WAS RIGHT THERE THE WHOLE TIME.
POP!
shhhhh
SNIFF SNIFF SNIFF
EEEERP!


I figured Fridge wasn't going to be needing the CD player anymore. So I left it in.

So that's how I got here. Mom was pretty cool. She didn't give me too hard a time. I think she figured I must've had a pretty rough night.
And I was gonna take every inch of slack she gave.
It's funny, but it was something my dad said on the tape that saved me. I guess Dad's not the only one with ugliness inside him. Maybe sometimes you have to be ugly...
...to survive.

Congrats to Daren Bader of San Diego, the winner of the contest that was announced in the last issue of *Inside Image*. Second place went to Ed Eyth of New York, and third to Alex Zemke of Fullerton, CA. Their art is printed in this issue somewhere.

The classified thingie we're doing, Head to Head, is getting lots of mail. The ones we printed this month were all received before May 18. In the future, we'll expand to two pages, but even then, you'd better mail 'em off TODAY! It's still first come, first served.

Dear Sam Kieth,

I'm a teenaged misfit in a small town. I don't have many friends (4 at the most), I can't get dates, I have a morbid personality, I'm bad at spelling, and I love The Maxx. I gain power and strength from yours, Julie's and Maxx's weirdness. It's nice to know that us freaks have a place to become more freakish. And The Maxx is that place. People try and tell me to fit in with the masses but I just won't do it. Anyway, this is not what this letter is for. What it is for is to praise your comic. Your artwork is great, it reminds me of van Gogh and Munch, my two favorite artists (that makes you my third). The story is great. The characters are very believable. All comic writers should strive for what you have made, perfect imperfection.

The other thing this letter is for is to ask you: If The Maxx became a movie, who would you want to direct it?

(name withheld by request)

Movie. Funny you should say that... Thanks for all the great feedback on the cartoon. A sample:

Dear Mr. Kieth,

I am just writing to say congratulations on your new cartoon on MTV. I saw it premiere on Saturday the 8th of April, at 10 o'clock, and was completely awestruck at the wonderful drawings and animation; it was not what I had expected at all. I can definitely say that this is one of the best comic adaptations that I have ever seen (or one of the best cartoons, for that matter).

Reza Malek
Bel Air, MD

Dear Sam,

About that cartoon: Wow—it's almost identical to the book. I love it but I can't say so for my granma. She says it's sick. I don't think it's sick, do you?

Weirdly yours,
Jason Martin
Columbus, OH

Of course—that's why I wrote it!

Dear Sam Kieth,

As an avid MAXX fan, I was at first a little scared when I heard that the most awaited televised event of my young life was going to be on MTV. What did this mean? Was Maxx going to run through the outback with Pearl Jam playing in the background? Was it going to be like 5 minutes long and cheaply animated? Would the absence of Sam Kieth's art make me agonize in disgust at the spectacle? I was so happy to find, on watching the premiere episode, that the answer to my vituperative questions was no. Not only did the cartoon contain much of the same art and dialogue as the comic, but it also captured the mood. It was great to see my first wish come true, so now, about those Pez dispensers...

C. M. King

Hey Sammy boy,

I guess you can just go ahead and put this with the rest of the fan mail concerning the cartoon, because I'm sure that you have piles of 'em. The anticipation for the cartoon was killing me and I was left totally stunned by the result. I think that this is the most successful comic to cartoon transformation that I have ever seen. I'm really glad that you decided to keep it as an almost exact reading of the comic, instead of totally screwing up the characters' attitudes and histories. All in all, the cartoon is magnificient.

Sincerely,
Christopher McJunkin
Timmonsville, SC

Like I said before, MTV and the animators at Rough Draft have been great to work with, and I really feel like they've respected The Maxx and my art all the way down the line, particularly Rough Draft head honcho Greg Vanzo.

CHRISTIAN HOLMES
Brooklyn Park, MN

Dear Sam,

Okay, so Issue 13 has Maxx on the cover, but apparently nowhere inside. At least, on first glance. But my friend Karl noticed that if you stared at it just right, the building on page 6 looks like Maxx's head. I though it was just a coincidence, but then he showed me the window opening on page 11 that looks like Mr. Gone's head.

Beers,
James Frisa
Los Angeles, CA

See, John and Abby—Maxx is in every issue!

Dear Sam,

I'm one of the few female Image Comics fans scattered all over the world, and I could say that The Maxx, after all these issues, has turned into a really magnificent character to read about. Personally, I thought that The Maxx sucked when I first saw him on Liquid TV. I didn't even tell my twin brother about it, since I didn't understand your artwork then. I gradually grew—er—attracted to The Maxx, and pretty soon I caught up with the books. Ish 10 really fascinated me, especially the part where Julie witnesses the "Twakking" of her bunny.

Dianne Jeanne-Michel Fernandez
Baguio City, Philippines

Hmmm...Ol' Maxx never was on Liquid TV. An impersonator, perhaps? Say, if I engage in bunny-Twakking, will I grow hare on my hands?

Hey Sam!

"Satori in Tangiers" much? I bet yer just getting tons of mail on this one. The thought occurs to me that you probably had nothing to do with the "Satori" appearance at the beginning of The Maxx ad for Oddities. Rest assured, I'll watch, "Satori" or not.

Rob, 21st Century schizoid man
Washington Twp., NJ

"Satori in Tangiers," for those wondering, is the cool, spooky music playing at the beginning of Maxx #1. It's the first 30 seconds of a King Crimson song. And yes, I picked it. (I helped Rough Draft Soundmeister Kurt Vanzo pick out all the music on the cartoon—why else would it be so bizarre?)

Dear Sam,

There is a question that has been bugging me for a whole week. If Maxx went to a sperm-bank and tried to donate sperm, which answer would he get: "No, we don't accept donations from huge purple rabbits with yellow claws," or "Sure, do you prefer magazines or a video?"

Your worshipper,
Jesse Boehme

[Insert your own joke here.]

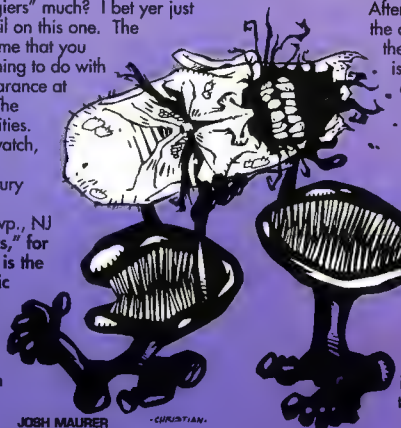
Sam and Bill,

My main goal for the spring quarter at Pacific Union College did not involve anything truly constructive (unless you count listing all the characters that appear in the songs on the White Album as constructive). Instead, my goal was to get my swell Modern Age of Literature teacher, Ms. Gill, English PhD, to read The Maxx.

I set the bait after giving a well-received presentation on the poet, Dylan Thomas. "Hey Ms. Gill, do you want to read a really cool, deep, profound, ironic, and uplifting piece of modern literature?" I pitched. She said, "Yeah, that'd be fun." So, the next day, I stuck the first six issues of The Maxx in her cubbyhole at the English department. For the rest of the week she said, in front of the whole class of other upper division English majors, that she had not gotten to reading the comic books yet, but was going to soon. I grinned and nodded.

Today, as I stood in the hall waiting to enter the classroom, Ms. Gill approached me and said, "The Maxx is incredible! It lends itself to everything: feminism, deconstruction, Freudianism, intertextuality! There were so many different literary references, like how he goes penetrating into The Heart of Darkness."

After class, Ms. Gill and I discussed the cardboard box as a symbol for the womb, the feminist dogma of issue #2, and how indescribably cool Mr. Gone is. She only read to issue four, so the discussion will likely continue even unto phenomenology. Also, one girl in class, Maria, noticed The Maxx and said that she had read the first two issues (one of her relations sent them to her since she "was the



JOSH MAURER
Falmouth, MA

English major.") She enjoyed them, and wanted to read the rest of it. I graciously agreed to lend her my issues after Ms. Gill was done. And once Maria's done, I plan to convert as many of the other English majors as possible. Can you envision it? A college literature class discussing The Maxx! The life philosophy of the next generation of intellectuals influenced by a violent, purple, clawed representation of a woman's repressed, split psyche! As Christopher Lloyd said in Who Framed Roger Rabbit, "My God, it'll be beautiful."

A soon-to-be-certified Maxxhead,,
Roy Rossi
Angwin, Ca

Does anybody have any idea what he's talking about?

Dear Sam,

In one of the issues, Gone was talking to a kid to get some tapes, and he flicks a marble. Does that have anything to do with issue #1 where a penny is rolling and the bum gets sucked into a box?

Your fan,
James Jung

Naw—I just like small things that roll.

Dear Sam,

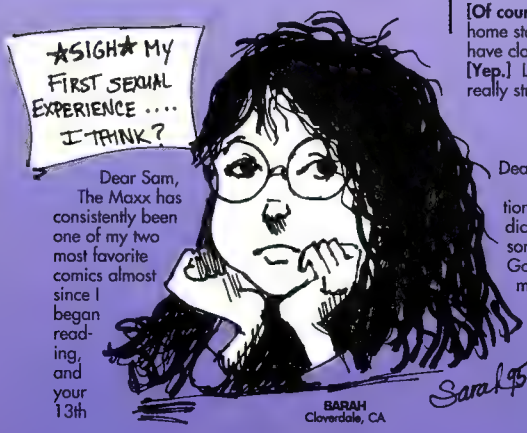
(1) Hey! How exactly does Maxx have sex? I'm confused. From reading The Maxx #14 it seemed as if you were inferring that Maxx and Sarah had a sexual experience. But from looking at the pictures...well, ya know...nobody was naked or anything.

(2) Does Maxx have sex differently than normal people?

I'm a Sarah too
Cloverdale, CA

(1) Maxx and Sarah did NOT have sex—they shared each other's dreams. And don't even ask me how Sarah's hand got wet.

(2) Doesn't everybody?



SARAH
Cloverdale, CA

Dear Sam,

The Maxx has consistently been one of my two most favorite comics almost since I began reading, and your 13th

EMILIO SOLTERO

issue reminds why (the other of the two being Frank Miller's Sin City). 13 was one of your better Maxx issues, even though it didn't feature Julie or Maxx. Instead it featured one of your strong supporting characters, Sarah James, Sarah's grandfather, and a new colorful character, Jill.

Sarah James is an interesting character, but she seems different than when we first saw her in Issue 4. Not just the way she looks, but the way her outlook on life is. She seems less cynical and bitter. And why is she just now concerned with her appearance?

The story about Sarah's grandfather was strange and thought-provoking, like most of your good Maxx stories. The only thing I didn't understand is why that hole to the outback was in front of the nursing home. Are you saying that there are migrating holes to different dimensions floating around New York that hapless people run into? **[Of course—it's New York!]** And if the nursing home staff hadn't pulled him out, would the hole have closed like the one Jasper lost his hand to? **[Yep.]** Like I said, each Maxx almost guarantees a really strange, but really good story.

Tony Vance
Thousand Oaks, CA

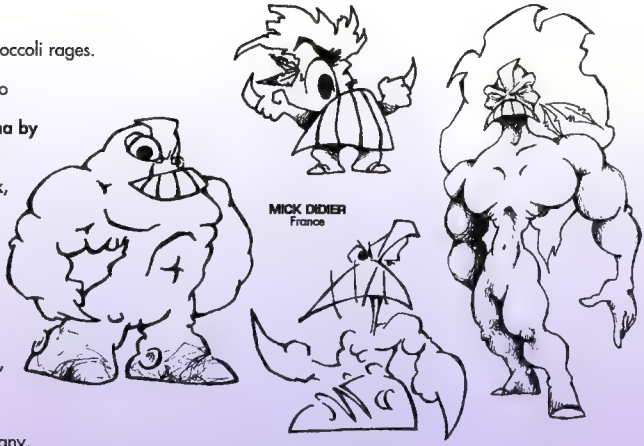
Dear Mr. Sam,

In response to your request for suggestions: In Maxx #9, Maxx tells the story of the dicant. Could perhaps the rubber shell or some other part be used to attach Mr. Gone's head back on? The dicant is a mutated plant as everyone knows. I believe this could stop the head from rotting and also keep it attached. But I would be worried about the side effects. Would plants or puff bladders start growing out of the side of Gone's neck or beard? Plus, Gone is already dangerous—he

could possibly go into broccoli rages.

Sincerely,
Tony J. Riccio
Delnad, FL

I started all this brouhaha by asking for ways to get Gone's head back on. (Sigh.) It will come back, minus the body; trust me. But look for more of a climax in Gone's ultimate ace up his sleeve: The gigantic, largest, most fearsome plant in the Outback, the old Avocado of Death Himself, the giant, terrible HOOLY (pronounced hoo-lee).



MICK DIDIER
France

To Sam Kieth and Company,

I'm going to be brutally honest with you. Until this Thursday, I never even considered picking up a copy of The Maxx for one simple reason: The cover illustrations turned me off. To my eye, it seemed like just another macho-bullsh*t Wolverine-wannabe superhero with requisite scantily-clad babe. **[You mean it's not?]** Well, I am now mortified to have to apologize to you and your crew.

It took MTV of all things to get me to change my mind and give The Maxx a chance, the chance I've given almost every other Image title since the company's inception. I watched the first four episodes (2 half-hour shows) and was fascinated. This was unlike any other superhero story ever written! Okay, that may be hyperbole, but if this idea had been done before, then it hadn't been accomplished with such depth and wonderul sarcasm toward itself.

The themes of insanity and feminism are rare in modern comic books, let alone finding them coexisting in the same storyline. Where else can one follow the antics of an ineffectual, homeless superhero who thinks he's insane, a primal jungle queen who was raped and created her own world in a desperate attempt to control her life and everyone else's, and a sociopathic, dimension-jumping, third-rate student of the mystic arts who can't seem to make up his mind whether or not to hinder or help the main characters, even when he himself is dead?

WILLIAM COMPTON-HOWLETT
Surrey, England

I've only read through Issue #6 by this time—but I am intrigued and gratified that I finally gave The Maxx a chance. He, and everyone in his world(s), are unique and I sincerely hope you can keep him that way.

Damon Noyes
Springfield, OR

Thanks for giving The Maxx a chance, and for looking past the horrible cover art.

Dear Sam Kieth,

I love The Maxx, but I have a problem. After the first issue, I missed a lot of others, and I was wondering if you knew where I could get them.

A big fan,
Buck Nemecek
Port Clinton, OH

Best source: your comic book dealer, who could order them from distributors. Or try cons, other fans, Head to Head, Comic Buyers' Guide. Neither we nor Image sell direct. No subscriptions, either. (Sorry.)

Dear Mr. Sam Kieth,

I never knew what happened to the Maxx CD. I asked my local comic book shop seller to be on the lookout for it and if he saw it, to get it for me. Well, he never found it. I'd love to get my hands on that CD.

Sincerely,
Mr. Jacob M. Larson
Richfield, MN

There IS NO Maxx CD. We and Animated Alligator have gone our separate ways, but we wish them well. Cherish your cassettes, 'cause that's it, folks.

Dear Sam,

You know how Mr. Gone said that the Isz turn meat eater when you bring them over? Well, aren't they meat eaters when they are in the Outback? I mean, what else would they eat, grass?!

Lance King
Fayetteville, AR

Isz are vegetarians in the outback because everything in the Outback is made out of vegetables. (Thanks to James Dean Conklin for clearing up this issue.)

Hullo Sam,

Why no funny by the copyright?

The Fridge sequences in jail were pretty cool. Fridge is kind of a deadly philosopher. Was Teego a man when Maxx killed him, or was he an Is? Maxx would have seen Teego as an Is if he wasz, right?

Daniel Wright

Things are getting pretty lax when you're the only one who notices the lack of copyright funniness, Dan. And yes, Teego wasz an Is. And yes, Maxx knew.

Dear Sam and Bill,

SEX... OK, did I get your attention (Hey, you do it to us!)?

First of all, congrats on conquering another medium (Gee, the way I write it, it sounds so epic). The Maxx cartoon is incredible! It's the perfect blend between being faithful to your original work and expanding that work into excellent new dialogue and scenes, like that pan across the city with Julie's narration in Episode #1.

This letter is also sorta to answer that question at the end of Ish 14's letter column about going on after #20. You have one resounding YES to that.

Your everlasting Maxxhead,
Eric Leibowitz
Brooklyn, NY

As nice as your comments are, I've got to keep my feet on the ground, but thanks. Issues 17-20 are the climax to the Maxx story, a kind of ending. The bunny goes back to protecting the Jungle Queen in the Outback, and Julie stops projecting part of herself onto this strange man she call The Maxx. Then she can know him for who he really is. Hence a new beginning.

The focus after #20 will be Sarah and her spirit animal, the horse. Maxx and Julie will still be a big part of the story, but 21-30 will be more about them helping Sarah sew things up with her dad.

Dear Mr. Kieth,

How do you do all that cool artwork with only one arm? Weird! It seems to us that art so magickly niftyrific would require two arms! Also, in Maxx #10 when the rabbit gets run over, it makes the sound, "Qusak." But we were walking down the street today and we saw a squirrel get run over by a truck. Even though we were disgusted, we heard the sound it made, and it was more like "thpbt sqthpptb."

Ben Jacobs
Josh Izenberg

WILLIAM COMPTON-HOWLETT
Surrey, England

Ann Arbor, MI

P.S. Kelly Jones RULES!

First of all, you must have me confused with Bill. This happens a lot, since we are twins who were separated at birth. (Actually, all the arms in the world wouldn't make my art any better.)

Second, "Qusak" is the sound of a bunny squishing, not a squirrel.

Dear Sam Kieth, Lord of all comics,

I just wrote because I have a couple of questions and comments. If your goal was to make a really weird comic, I have to congratualate you. I mean, The Maxx is WEIRD. Even though he's a sadistic serial rapist/killer, I can't help almost feeling sorry for Mr. Gone. I mean, first Julie decapitates him, then Julie decapitates him again, then Maxx stomps his face, then Harry flattens his face. Geez! His face sure has seen action! Hasn't he had enough? Speaking of good ol' Mr. Gone, does Julie know it's her loveable Uncle Artie she beheaded, twice.

Why has Julie (a.k.a. Jill) returned to a life of casual sex and crime? I think it's because she's seen her world come crashing down around her and is trying to run from the truth which is rapidly being revealed back where she lives.

By the way, if Julie created the Outback, how is Mr. Gone taking Isz over to the real world? The only answer I can see is that Julie is a goddess who can create worlds, and how many goddesses do you know of with potbellies? Your story has plot holes big enough to drive a Mack truck through.

Your fan (sort of),
Travis Hepburn
Omaha, NE

Hey, Travis—all the best goddesses have potbellies.

Dear Sam,

While I bought the first four issues of Maxx, I somehow never got around to actually purchasing this series on a regular basis. Which is kinda strange considering that I feel William Messner-Loebs is one of the most underrated writers in the field these days, who, with his sublime and often extremely wonderful dialogue always manages to put the right words in the mouths of the characters, and also considering that I have always loved your off-beat, rather untraditional artwork ever since I first laid eyes on it quite some years back.

As for the tale presented in this very issue itself, I must say that apart from those scenes in the slammer—where I simply missed the point, probably due to my not reading this series for ten issues in a row—it was a very powerful exploration of the interpersonal relationships between what are the three most appealing main characters of the book. Maxx's frustration over the fact that Julie has vanished out of his life for all those months without a word and now simply barged in again, pregnant, thinking she can just go on with her life again, was very well protrayed. The following scene with Sarah and Julie talking outside the latter's apartment also was a very intriguing one, probably even more powerful, in that it showed us a wide variety of emotions in a mere six pages. Great work, guys.

Olaf Beemer
The Netherlands

We agree about Bill. Incidently, he has a number of things stirring career-wise in addition to The Maxx. We'll let you know where else to look for him.

Dear Maxximum plot crew,

After reading #15, the question that springs to my mind is why? Why did Julie abandon her quest for "self" for the adventures of a nymphomaniac? Not that I'm complaining, really, and I'm sure you will explain it in your own time; I just want to know why. That's the kinda guy I am.

Jay McIntyre
Doylestown, PA

Read on.

Mr. Kieth,

If that was Julie in the cheap motel, stealing that guy's car, Whoa! Who woulda known? That kinda sucks, I don't want to think of her like that. Oh well, if she was real she's still have my respect. People f*ck up, y'know?

Peace out,
Ryan Paddick
Edwardsville, PA

Yeah, I know. Sarah and Maxx had problems with it, too. It's gonna take 'em time to come to the insights you had.

1st place

'95

DAREN BADER
San Diego

THE MAXX™

ART CONTEST

WINNERS OF THE MAXX ART CONTEST IN INSIDE IMAGE #26

3rd place

ALEX ZEMKE
Fullerton, CA

2nd place

ED EYTH
New York, NY

Aaron Rix
Long Beach, CA